Australian Bureau of Statistics

6202.0 - Labour Force, Australia, Feb 2017 Quality Declaration

ARCHIVED ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 16/03/2017

MEDIA RELEASE

16 March 2017 Embargo: 11:30 am (Canberra Time) 23/2017

Trend unemployment rate at 5.8 per cent

The trend unemployment rate in Australia was 5.8 per cent in February 2017, according to figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) today.

"Over the past year, we have continued to see a relatively steady trend unemployment rate between 5.7 per cent and 5.8 per cent," said the Acting General Manager of ABS' Macroeconomic Statistics Division, Jacqui Jones. It should be noted that January 2017 trend unemployment rate was revised up from 5.7 per cent to 5.8 per cent, as part of the standard monthly revisions.

The quarterly trend underemployment rate remained at 8.6 per cent. "The underemployment rate is still at a historically high level for Australia, but has been relatively unchanged over the past two years," said Ms Jones.

Trend employment increased by 11,600 persons to 12,005,000 persons in February 2017, reflecting an increase in both full-time (4,600) and part-time (6,900) employment. This was the fifth straight month of increasing full-time employment, after eight consecutive decreases earlier in 2016.

Total employment growth over the year was 0.8 per cent, which was less than half the average growth rate over the past 20 years (1.8 per cent).

The trend monthly hours worked increased by 1.2 million hours (0.1 per cent), with increases in total hours worked by both full-time workers and part-time workers.

The trend participation rate was unchanged at 64.6 per cent.

Trend series smooth the more volatile seasonally adjusted estimates and provide the best measure of the underlying behaviour of the labour market.

The seasonally adjusted number of persons employed decreased by 6,400 in February 2017. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased by 0.2 percentage points to 5.9 per cent, and the seasonally adjusted labour force participation rate was unchanged at 64.6 per cent.

More details are in the February 2017 issue of Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0). In addition, further information, including regional labour market information, can be found in the upcoming February 2017 issue of Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001), due for release on 23 March 2017. Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003), which includes employment by industry, is also due for release on 23 March.

These publications are available for free download (after release) from the ABS website: https://www.abs.gov.au.

Media note:

- When reporting ABS data, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (or ABS) must be attributed as the source.
- For media requests and interviews, contact the ABS Communications Section on 1300 175 070 (8.30am - 5pm Mon-Fri).
- The ABS produces trend estimates to provide a more reliable indicator of the underlying behaviour of the Labour Force series. Trend estimates were introduced into the Labour Force series in the mid 1980s and are available back to February 1978. Trend estimates are considered the best indicators of the underlying behaviour in the labour market. See paragraphs 28 to 37 of the Explanatory Notes in Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0).
- Subscribe to our email notification service and get media releases or products sent to you on release.

This page last updated 12 April 2017

© Commonwealth of Australia

All data and other material produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) constitutes Commonwealth copyright administered by the ABS. The ABS reserves the right to set out the terms and conditions for the use of such material. Unless otherwise noted, all material on this website – except the ABS logo, the Commonwealth Coat of Arms, and any material protected by a trade mark – is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 2.5 Australia licence